

Shortly before 2 p.m., Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus, commander of the 101st Airborne, drove in an armed convoy up a rocky escarpment into Najaf, urged on by clapping Iraqis who gestured impatiently for the Americans to press deeper into the city center.

It gives me a great deal of pride for the 101st Airborne to be able to hear these real-life stories of the bravery and boldness of General Petraeus. I was with Holly Petraeus this past Sunday at the 101st Airborne. She hosted Karen, my wife, and me to lunch and attending a church service. She is doing a tremendous job of keeping up the spirit of all the families there and has become a real focal point for the community efforts in Hawesville, KY, Clarksville, TN, and on the base to support our troops. We have a lot to be proud of, with tough days ahead.

Meanwhile, the Senate will be addressing the supplemental emergency spending in order to support our troops, as well as the underlying budget, which I hope to complete—which we will complete by April 11.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business not to exceed beyond the hour of 11 a.m., with the time to be equally divided between the Senator from Texas, Mrs. HUTCHISON, and the Democratic leader or his designee, the Senator from Nevada.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the troops. I am totally amazed when I watch the television reports at the bravery displayed by those who are serving our Nation in harm's way.

There is a saying from the Scriptures that:

A man can have no greater love than to lay down his life for his friends.

The motto of my home State of Nevada is: All for our country. Nevada has a long and proud history of patriotism and contributing to this Nation's defense in times of peace and in times of conflict. Many brave Nevadans have proudly donned the uniform of our armed services. Unfortunately, some of our finest have lost their lives in service to our Nation.

Nevada has lost several servicemen during the ongoing war on terrorism, and last week we learned of our first casualty in Operation Iraqi Freedom. LT Fred Pokorney was killed during a cowardly ambush on our marines near An Nasiriyah, Iraq. His death has brought the reality of war to families across Nevada. His life and dedication have touched and inspired me.

I wish I had known Fred when he played for the Tonopah High School basketball and football teams. I only had the opportunity to learn about this gentle giant, for that is what he was, since he made the ultimate sacrifice for me, my family, for all Nevadans, and all Americans.

It should not come as a surprise, but when I learn about these brave men and women who risk their lives and sacrifice so much to defend our freedom, I am awed by the caliber of their character, integrity, and dedication. Fred Pokorney is the perfect example.

Nothing was handed to Fred. He overcame challenges that would have been an excuse for others to quit. He was incredibly well liked for his positive attitude and competitive spirit. He joined the Marines right out of high school and graduated with a degree in military science from Oregon State University, also my alma mater. He loved being a marine.

A tremendous void is being felt by those who knew Fred best. Just as it is inspiring to hear about the character of men and women who serve in our military, it is heartening to speak to those left behind and hear the pride they somehow find the strength to share. When I spoke to Fred's wife—she goes by Chelle—it was obvious her husband is a hero to her as he is to us all. She is comforted by the knowledge that she knew what it was to have peace and love.

Now she is charged with raising their 2½ year old daughter Taylor—and passing Fred's legacy on to her, and Fred's love for country on to us all.

On the telephone last week, Chelle read me the last letter Fred wrote to her and to his daughter Taylor. I would have brought those letters to the floor but, frankly, I could not have read those letters without breaking down because of the emotions that were communicated from one of our soldiers on the battlefield to his family.

Chelle told me Fred's death, though, gave her hope. She feels a responsibility to take Fred's pride, strength, and deep patriotism, and instill it in other Americans. So long as freedom thrives and she can help other Marine families heal, Chelle knows Fred's death will not have been in vain.

What Chelle does not realize is that she, too, is a hero. The families who support our military wait anxiously for word from their loved ones and continue the motions of life while their loved ones are away. They are heroes also. Without their strength and support, our troops could not be the best in the world. I stand here today, grateful for the bravery of Fred Pokorney and inspired by the courage of Chelle Pokorney and others like them.

For Taylor, I pray she grows up to know that her father's death on the battlefield of freedom was not in vain. I pray when she is older, Taylor will know the gratitude of this Nation for her father's sacrifice, and for her sacrifice.

God bless LT Fred Pokorney and God bless his family.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, while I know there are some who may have different views about what is happening in Iraq and our country's role in it, I think there is really no disagreement in our country about what our sons and daughters do for America when they are sent to fight for freedom. There should be no disagreement about our support for the troops that are in harm's way halfway across the world.

My colleague from Nevada and others have spoken eloquently about the commitment these young men and women have made to their country. They leave home, they leave the comforts of their community, they leave their family, and they march in the face of danger.

This morning I went to Bethesda Naval Hospital to visit a young man whom I had appointed to the Naval Academy some 12 years ago. His name is Jason Frei from Hazen, ND. A wonderful young man, he has kept in touch with me each year since he graduated from the Naval Academy, sending me Christmas cards, telling me how he is doing and what he is doing.

He left his wife and two children to go to Iraq with his Marine unit. Jason was wounded last week and is now back at Bethesda Naval Hospital. He has lost a part of his arm. His eardrum was punctured. He was injured by a rocket-propelled grenade when it hit his vehicle.

He is a remarkable man. This morning he was very positive. He was in good spirits and he told me about the men and women with whom he served. This morning in the hospital he was most concerned about his unit, which is still in Iraq—how they were doing, what they were doing. He is, I think, symbolic of those brave men and women who always answer the call for our country.

This is a young man from a small town in North Dakota, but he could be a young man or woman from a town anywhere in America who, when his country needs him, answers the call.

In North Dakota, we have the highest percentage of callups in the Guard and Reserve of any State in the Nation. More than one-third of our National Guard and Reserve have been called to active duty.

A young woman on my staff in Bismarck has been called to active duty with the National Guard, a young lieutenant. They go and serve because they are called to serve our country.

I recall one day at a veterans' hospital in Fargo, ND, pinning the medals on the pajama tops of a Native American named Edmund Young Eagle who served during World War II. He had never gotten his medals. His sisters asked if I could help get the medals for him, whom I didn't know just a week from death. He had lung cancer. We got his medals and on a Sunday morning